

Long Island Sound Lobster Fisheries

Date of Declaration/Determination: September, 1999

Location: Long Island Sound off the States of Connecticut and New York

Cause: Extensive lobster mortality due to unknown causes, but perhaps due to an environmental situation.

Authority: Sec 312(a) of MSA

Appropriation: FY 2000 Emergency Supplemental, June 29, 2000--
\$13.9 million

\$6.6 million--research

\$7.3 million--economic impacts/assessment (\$3.65 million each to Connecticut and New York)

The breakdown of Federal funds by State for economic work is as follows:

Connecticut

\$750 K--trap tag buyback

\$37.5K--job retraining

\$75.0K--small business development

\$2.79 million-- economic compensation/lost income

New York

\$2.26 million--economic compensation/lost income

\$750.0K--trap tag buyback

\$375.0K--interest subsidy loans

\$150.0K--training

\$112.5K--tuition reimbursement

Assistance Provided:

The Supplemental provided for \$3.65 million each to New York and Connecticut to compensate individuals for reductions in lobster catch; provide direct sustaining aid to fishermen; and assist communities that have suffered losses from the lobster die-offs. Remaining funds (\$6.6 M) were for research into the causes of the

disaster.

Research funds have been divided among NMFS, Sea Grant, and cooperating agencies in the two States.

Connecticut Assistance Program

A grant was awarded to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for a total of \$4.87 M (including match) for an economic assistance program to compensate individuals for reductions in lobster catch due to the resource disaster; buy back active and latent trap tags; and provide job retraining and business development assistance to lobstermen.

As of April 2003, a total of 18,798 actively fished traps and 33,714 latent traps have been relinquished for an expenditure of \$990,576. This represents a 17.4% reduction in the total traps that were allocated to Connecticut fishermen at the inception of the disaster assistance program. Approval to use \$96,039 in unexpended administrative funds will enable CT to buy back an additional 1,387 actively fished traps and 4,511 latent traps--a further 2% reduction in total trap allocations. The request to utilize \$96,039 is still pending in NOAA GMD.

New York Assistance Program

NOAA awarded a grant of \$4.87 million (\$3.65 million plus match) to New York to compensate lobstermen for reductions in catch; buy back lobster trap tags; subsidize interest costs on existing debt for affected fishermen; and provide job retraining and technical assistance consulting.